

The Story of "Mrs. Rescue"

By M. QUAD

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We were between the Azores and Madeira, bound for a port in the West Indies, in the American ship Ben Joyce when a curious thing happened one morning about an hour before daylight. I was digging my eyes and fighting away sleep when a curious sound from over the bows caught my ear. As I listened to the noise the only thing I could compare it to was the noses of sharks bumping up against a small boat. It would have been ridiculous to call to the mate and give him any such wild explanation, but I finally called his attention to the curious noises and left the cause to his own perception.

"There's a raft or a boat out there," he said after a moment, "and the noise may be made by oars. I'll burn a port fire."

The port fire lighted up the sea for a hundred feet around, and the first thing we saw was a ship's boat within forty feet of us on the port bow. In the bottom of the boat were two human figures, and one of them was a woman, and all around the boat the sea was alive with sharks. As soon as we caught sight of the boat the mate ran to call the captain. By the time the captain arrived the boat had drifted right down against us, and one of the crew lowered himself into her and made fast the painter. Then I got down to assist him, and we passed up the bodies—the man first. We might just as well have dropped him into the sea, for he had been dead for twenty-four hours at least. He was recognized by all as a sailor. As we picked up the woman, having no doubt that she was dead also, she moved and uttered a groan. We had her on board after a couple of minutes, and the small boat, which was a captain's gig, new and without a name, was later hoisted up.

The woman awoke to find herself aboard of a strange ship, with strange men around her. She was a handsome, well formed woman, English in looks and speech and about thirty years of age. Her apparel was fine and costly, but she wore no jewelry and had neither a purse nor a cardcase. When asked how she came to be at sea in the gig, what her name was, if she had visited Madeira or the Azores, if she lived in England, she could tell nothing. She began a new life when she opened her eyes in the cabin of the Joyce. After three or four days both cabin and fo'castle came to the same conclusion, which was this: The sailor must have been rowing the woman off to a ship or from a ship to shore at some of the islands.

That's the way we figured it out, and it looked reasonable enough, and, of course, the right thing to do was to leave the woman at Trinidad and report the case as widely as possible. Queerly enough, she fought and baffled this plan. Our captain was a good looking man, and, feeling that she owed him her life and doubtless being rather romantic by nature, what did she do but fall in love with him! That is only half the story. He fell head over heels in love with her. The position was most embarrassing for him, however. All of us agreed that the woman was or had been a wife, though she had no finger ring to prove it. I think he saw things as an honorable man should, and yet he could not help loving her. When we reached Trinidad he notified the English consul, placed the woman in the household of a friend and then sailed for the port of New York.

The story of our picking up the living and the dead was published far and wide. The publication of that story all over the world did not solve the mystery. No husband came forward; no relatives wrote.

When three years had elapsed and still no news had come the two were married. The woman had not recovered one single point of memory. She was a stranger to herself. She had no country, no relatives, no name except by chance. After marriage the captain left the sea and went into the ship chandlery business in Brooklyn. One evening two years after the wedding the captain of an English tramp steamer just in called to ask for some information. He complained of not being well, and, one thing leading to another, he finally related a tale of woe. Several years before, while his ship was at the Azores, his wife, who had been sent ashore in the morning, attempted to return about nightfall, just as a squall was coming up. The boat upset, and the occupants were lost. They found neither the boat nor the bodies, but there was no doubt of the calamity. The loss of the wife so affected the husband that he was ill of brain fever for months, and he had never read a line of her rescue in mid-ocean. There was the husband at last, and Captain Clark realized that he had rights before him. They were alone in the office, and perhaps he thought of killing the man who had come to break up his happy home. It was only a step to the edge of the ship, and perhaps he thought of suicide as the best way out. The climax was a curious one, but in keeping. The strange captain, who had given his name as Burke, was looking at Captain Clark in a puzzled way and wondering why he should be so affected by the story when a yacht anchor swinging from a beam above his head parted its fastenings and fell upon him and crushed him to the floor, and, though he did not die for two days, he never spoke again.

A Diabolical Plot

By MARGARET C. DEVEREAUX

A lady and a gentleman stood on the deck of an ocean liner about to depart for the Mediterranean.

"Upon my word," said the latter, "if there isn't my old chum Dick Thurston coming aboard loaded down with hand baggage. I haven't seen him in four years. He's going across, sure. I wish I were going."

"Introduce him. He'll serve to lighten the annul during the voyage."

"I'll do it on one condition."

"What condition?"

"That you go for him. I'll let him think you're my wife instead of my cousin, and you must keep up the deception. He's always prating about honor in not making love to a friend's wife and all that sort of thing, while I claim that if a woman can get a man in love with her she can turn him over to Satan, body and soul. Do you agree?"

Miss Katherine Maryweather in her heart snapped at the idea, but she occupied the few minutes to spare in declaring that she would do no such abominable thing. Thurston was brought up and introduced to her, Frank Waters having given him the impression that he had been married since they had met and he wished him to take charge of his wife for the voyage.

"Remember," said Dick, giving his cousin a parting kiss, much to the envy of Thurston.

"I'll remember nothing," was the reply.

Miss Maryweather was an unconscionable flirt, and this request of her cousin especially appealed to her. She had brought many a man to her feet, as Waters well knew, but she had not experienced the zest attending making a man a traitor to an intimate friend. As to deliberately stating to Thurston that she was Waters' wife, she repelled such a sin with horror; she would merely suffer him to suppose she was.

The voyage consumed twelve days, during which the weather was delightful, the sea smooth, and all were on deck every day and moonlight nights from start to finish. Before the vessel reached the Azores Thurston's conscience was troubling him dreadfully. At Gibraltar he made a weak effort to leave the ship and do the rest of the journey by land. The night before reaching Naples he seriously contemplated jumping overboard. He had not offended, indeed, against his old friend, but he had been criminal in word and thought up to his chin. Miss Maryweather had bewitched him.

Once ashore, he righted himself and fled—fled to Rome, where he had intended to remain a month. But, fearing that the supposed Mrs. Waters would be coming up that way, he lit out for Florence. Indeed, he never stopped till he reached Lucerne.

Frank Waters had made arrangements to join his cousin at a summer resort on Lake Thun, and they met there in July.

"Well?" said Frank inquiringly.

"Did you break down Thurston's self respect?"

"Certainly not. Mr. Thurston is a very honorable man."

"Since you don't seem disposed to tell me what happened I'll ask Dick."

"He'll tell you nothing."

"Won't he? Do you mean that he will lie about it?"

"He needn't lie. He can simply refuse to talk."

"I won't ask him. I'll charge him with all sorts of dishonorable things, and he won't deny them."

"Such as?"

"I'll say, 'Dick, you've been making love to my wife?'"

"What else?"

"In a moment of weakness you proposed to her to leave me and take up with you."

"If you accuse him of such a thing I'll never speak to you again."

"I won't do it if you assure me he didn't."

"You had no business to introduce him to me, letting him suppose I was your wife."

"Why didn't you disabuse him?"

"Why didn't I? Why, because?"

He looked at her with an amused smile, then continued:

"Dick Thurston is a mighty good friend of mine. When I saw him going aboard the ship in which you sailed I knew you would expect an introduction; that you would flirt him all the way over and send him off with the rest of them on reaching Italy. What I did I did for his protection."

"How for his protection?"

"In the first place, if he believed you to be my wife it might help him to resist you. In the second, if you succeeded you would be so tangled up in your deceptions that you could be managed. I'm going to confess the matter to him—my past and yours."

"You'll do no such thing!"

"What shall I say to him? He is at Lucerne, and I'm going to run down there tomorrow to see him."

"What shall you do? Why, let him discover that I'm not your wife without saying anything about your detestable plot?"

"Or yours?"

"This thrust was received in silence."

"If I do as you say will you treat him honorably in future?"

"Yes, I will!"

The former Miss Maryweather is now Mrs. Thurston.

The Head of The House

By LOUISE B. CUMMINGS

"Susie," said Tom Atherton in a serious tone of voice, "I've been doing a job of thinking on our future."

"Why, Tom, what have you been thinking about?"

"Well, when we're married there's got to be a head to our partnership. There's always a head to every business firm."

"Do tell!"

"Now, what's marriage but a co-partnership? There'll be you and I, and some day?"

"You'll be manager, of course."

"What a sensible girl you are! Do you know what first attracted me to you? It was your good sense. You catch on to anything so quick. We'll be just as happy as two doves, won't we?"

And he drew her to him and gave her a couple of dozen premarital kisses. He is content with one now, and sometimes when he's thinking on other matters even that is perfunctory.

Tom's salary was not large, and the couple had no income except what he earned. The husband had not been an expert on economy, but the wife was a good manager. "I'll just turn over to you," he said, "my salary check each week, and you do all the planning. I shall need very little for my personal expenses, and I can take that as I want it. That's the way they do in business. One man attends to getting the business, another to doing it, while a third looks out for the finances."

"The finance man of the company, isn't he?"

"Well, yes, usually."

"In our case you make the income on which we live, and I attend to its expenditure. In other words, you are head of the firm, and I'm the junior partner."

"I suppose that's the way to look at it."

So Tom turned over the checks each Saturday night to his wife, and, since she was a splendid manager, all went very well. There were no outstanding bills, nothing absolutely needful that was not forthcoming, while a percentage of each week's salary was put away regularly for emergencies, such as doctor's bills, and another amount for a nest egg.

"My dear," said the happy husband "when I run a big business I'll want you for my financial manager. I could make money in any enterprise with you to handle the cash."

"And isn't it nice," replied the wife, "that you can feel that you're the head of the house?"

"I'll admit," said Tom thoughtfully, "that it is. No man likes to feel that he must be obedient to a woman."

It was a few days after this remark that Tom needed a pair of gloves. Susie told him to go to her box, where she kept the household moneys, and get what he needed. There was nothing smaller than a five dollar bill. He took it, expecting to return the change. Unfortunately, during the day an old chum that he hadn't seen for years came in to see him. Tom took him out to lunch and when he went home returned \$3 to the cash box instead of \$4. The result was that when Tom gave his wife the marital kiss she smelled beer. She said nothing, but after he had deposited the balance of the cash she went to the drawer and found it a dollar short.

"Tom," she said, "how much did you take from the box this morning?"

"A five. There was nothing smaller."

"How much did your gloves cost?"

"A dollar."

"That leaves \$4 to go back. Have you put it all in?"

"All, except a dollar."

"What became of that?"

"Well, you see, Pete Hathaway came to town today, and I took him out to lunch with me."

The look on Mrs. Atherton's face was lowering, but she said nothing. There was a silent dinner between them, after which Tom said:

"Susie, I wish you'd get that look off your face. It's all because I spent a dollar today—a miserable, single dollar—and that entertaining an old friend I haven't seen for several years."

"Who authorized you to spend a dollar for such a purpose?"

"Who authorized me? Am I accountable to you for the money I spend?"

"I thought I was to be the financial member of our firm."

"So you are, so you are, but am I not the head of the concern?"

"Of course you are! But that dollar you spent today I intended for another purpose."

"What purpose?"

"I had just enough with it to buy our Sunday provisions. Now we'll have to eat canned salmon for Sunday dinner."

That was the beginning, a new light breaking in on Tom's brain. His wife's management of their affairs was so excellent, produced such beneficial results, that he became more of a slave to her every day. True, there was a profit in it all, but Tom was a slave all the same. "Somebody once declared," he says, "that he didn't care who made a nation's laws so long as he could write its songs. My wife doesn't care who makes the money for the family so long as she disburses it. Head of the house be hanged! I have to account to her for every penny I spend."

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Dated at North Platte, May 4, 1914.
CORDA V. O'BRIEN, Administratrix,
m5-3 E. H. Evans, Attorney.